

you quote, as the opinion of the official referees, "as to the mode of erection which may be pursued with regard to buildings so commenced" (i. e. duly commenced before January 1), "we are of opinion that as to such buildings within the operation of the old Buildings Act (14 Geo. 3, c. 78), they must be built according to the provisions of that Act, since these proceedings, commenced or taken under that Act before the 1st January, are not repealed." In the case stated in my letter 22nd February, I feel that I owe the referees an apology for venturing to assume they had overlooked this exception; but with this knowledge included in the circular to the district surveyors, how came the district surveyor, having received admitted legal notice under the old Act, to issue the summons? And still more startling is it that the referees, in opposition to their own dictum, appointed a hearing of the case, attended on our part by three surveyors and witnesses. Who is to pay our costs for this?

Having now touched upon each point in the circular from the referees, I propose for the present to intrude on your columns with one further letter only, proposing concisely to set out the points at issue—to bring the whole matter by a kind of abstract before your readers, that such course may be taken as shall be deemed expedient. It must be evident the referees cannot notice such statements; and being but the opinions of an individual, they can lead to no practical result. In my last letter I stated my intention of declining the proposed conference with the referees; upon consideration, I felt I was not justified in so doing, inasmuch as the interview was not proposed to discuss the merits of the case (another day being named for the hearing thereof), but simply to discuss my allegations of irregularities in the proceedings. I am really glad that I attended the meeting; and have much pleasure in stating that in an extended conference, free discussion was permitted on the smallest point, and an evident desire evinced to elicit the truth.

Although I do not feel myself at liberty to give to the public the details of the discussion, it has enabled me to arrive at a conclusion in my own mind of what the duties were intended to be, and as my allegations and the reply of the district surveyor, whom I met, have become public records, I do not feel the same hesitation in bringing them forward in illustration of my arguments in my promised concluding letter. My present impression is, that the duties of the official referees are more defined than we have imagined, but that difficulty to some considerable extent, will arise from a want of controlling power to prevent parties unnecessarily calling in the district surveyors, and through them moving the office of the official referees. My present view is, that the machinery once put in motion, there is no alternative but to proceed; but it would be a disgrace to the intelligence and science of the present day to imagine that a well-constructed drag might not be adapted to check a body impelled by the most fearful impetus; and I have a glimmering of hope that a safety valve may be constructed through the medium of the Commissioners of Works and Buildings, by the power delegated to them by sec. 11, upon a fair and candid representation being made to them of difficulty having arisen in the construction to be put on certain clauses.

GREENWAY ROBINS.

THE CHURCH.—At a meeting, held two weeks ago, of the Incorporated Society for promoting the enlargement, building, and repairing of churches and chapels, grants were voted towards building two new churches—viz. at Seer Green, near Slough, and at Sandown, in the Isle of Wight; and towards rebuilding, with enlargement, the churches at Croxdale, near Durham; Illogan, near Redruth; Puttoxhill, near Silsoe; Runcorn, Cheshire; Goytreas, near Pontypool; Bradpole, near Bridport; and Woolfardsworthy, near Crediton. And likewise towards the enlargement or otherwise increasing the accommodation in the following churches—viz. Whitpole, near Honiton, Devonshire; Market Bosworth, Leicestershire; Haverfordwest, South Wales; and Coombe Bisset, near Salisbury.

WORKS IN THE PROVINCES.

At Bury St. Edmund's, a move has already been made towards establishing a museum of art in that town. The chamber over the abbey gate has been suggested as being well-adapted for the purpose, both as regards size and locality. A correspondent of the *Bury and Suffolk Herald* states, that from the well-known liberality of the Marquis of Bristol, but little doubt exists of his willingness to grant it for the object proposed.

At the great Highland gathering, in August next, in celebration of the "forty-five," and which is to take place in the centre of one of the most wild, beautiful, and picturesque scenes in the Highlands, a magnificent Celtic cairn is to be erected to the memory of the author of "Waverley." Every individual present, of whatever country, will have the opportunity of "adding a stone to the cairn" of the mighty wizard.

At Liverpool, a new observatory has recently been erected by the corporation. It is near the south-west corner of the Waterloo Dock, and a few yards from the river wall. The building is of hewn red free-stone two stories in height. The principal front is to the south, with a central semi-circular projection. There is a smaller frontage to the west, affording a fine view of the river and the Cheshire shore. The chief apartments consist of the chronometer room, the transit room, and the equatorial room. The primary object of this observatory is not so much for general astronomical observations, as for the practical purposes of ascertaining true time for the accurate rating of ships' chronometers,—in other words, for the immediate use and benefit of the port, in this respect, a desideratum which has long been felt.

Application will shortly be made to Parliament for an Act to construct certain reservoirs at the head of the river Kent, in Westmoreland. It appears from a petition lately presented to the House of Commons from the inhabitants of Staveley, that the falls of water on the river have been the great source of trade, and, by the drainage of land and a lake called Kentmere Tarn, the river is more easily influenced by floods and drought, so that many have suffered severely from the want of water in dry seasons. That many falls are still unoccupied by mills whose value would be increased by a constant supply of water. That coal is very dear, and consequently water is the only power obtainable in the neighbourhood; and that unless reservoirs are constructed, the river Kent will become altogether unprofitable for manufacturing purposes.

At St. Ives, the new National Schools are progressing very fast towards completion; the style is Gothic, and the building will be ornamental to the town. The master is appointed, and the schools will be opened this spring.

At Coventry, a commodious and substantial new school-room, belonging to Bailey's charity, has recently been erected at the back of the old premises in Little Park-street. It was opened for the first time on Sunday morning last, in the presence of the school trustees and several clergymen.

A public meeting was held last week at Rotherham, Yorkshire, for the purpose of adopting measures for the establishment of public baths. A company has in consequence been formed, and the necessary funds are to be raised by the issue of shares of 5*l.* each. A provisional committee was appointed to canvass the town and neighbourhood for subscribers, to look out for an eligible site, obtain plans and estimates, and to report to a future meeting of subscribers at the earliest possible opportunity. A letter was read from Mr. Butler, one of the secretaries of the London committee for forming public baths and wash-houses, offering any aid which might be in his power to facilitate the object of the meeting.

A public company has been formed for the purpose of improving the outfall below Lynn, in Norfolk, and for reclaiming from the sea 30,000 acres of land, part of the estuary called "the Wash," between the counties of Norfolk and Lincoln. To carry out the object, it is proposed to raise a capital of 500,000*l.* The trustees consist of Earl Fitzwilliam, Sir Thomas Hare, Bart., Earl of Orford, Lord George Bentinck, M.P., William Bagge, Esq., M.P., and W. W. Chute, Esq., M.P. The Duke of Portland has subscribed 5,000*l.* towards the undertaking.

At Deal, the Commissioners of Pavement have determined upon purchasing the houses at the south of the Esplanade, and throwing the sites thereof into the street. The town will be considerably improved by this judicious step on the part of the trust.

At Northampton, a dispensary is about to be erected in commemoration of her Majesty and Prince Albert passing through that city on their late visit to the Marquis and Marchioness of Exeter, at Burleigh House. The noble marquis, as lord lieutenant of the county, has addressed a communication to the Mayor of Northampton, signifying her Majesty's consent at the intended new establishment bearing the name of "The Victoria Dispensary."

At Exeter, the members of "The Episcopal Free-Church" have purchased a site on the east side of Southernhay, nearly opposite the entrance to the cathedral close, for the purpose of erecting a sacred building.

At Hull, the Victoria Promenade is progressing most favourably, although little has lately been heard of it. Lord Fitzwilliam, Lord Milton, and the Hon. Mr. Fitzwilliam, have recently become shareholders. The promoters have had their attention up to the present time almost entirely directed towards procuring the requisite land. The committee of the Church Building Fund have fixed upon the neighbourhood of Kingston College as an eligible site for the proposed new church at Hull. The church is to be dedicated to St. Paul.

The proposal to build a bridge over the Mersey has been revived, and Mr. William Stuart, a Scottish engineer, has submitted a very ingenious plan for carrying the project into effect.

The political friends and admirers of the late Lord Holland have subscribed 5,000*l.* for a monument to his memory, to be placed in Westminster Abbey. The committee of management have intrusted the execution of the work to Mr. Baily, the Royal Academician.

The Earl of Shrewsbury has just concluded a treaty with a building company in Cheshire, by which his lordship receives 35,000*l.* for 85 acres of his extensive property in that county.

An important project is in contemplation, which, if carried out, will prove of immense advantage to Maidstone and the surrounding country. The proposition is to deepen and widen the River Medway, so as to make it navigable up to Maidstone.

The Council of the United Service Institution, in Scotland-yard, have lately purchased the adjoining house of Lord Stuart de Rothsay, for 3,500*l.*, subject to a ground-rent of 250*l.* a year. The purchase has been made with the view of enlarging the museum, and constructing a spacious lecture-room. The Earl of Arundel, who is vice-president, has contributed the liberal donation of 100*l.* towards the contemplated improvements.

It appears that Prince Albert was so much delighted with the game of tennis whilst at Brighton, that it is his Royal Highness's intention to build a tennis court at Buckingham-palace.

ARLES.—Plans have been made (says the *Constitutionnel*) for the restoration of the Amphitheatre of Arles, and the Church of St. Owen at Roum. The estimated expense of the first is 400,000*l.* and of the second 1,400,000*l.*

WALLS BUILT OVER WELLS.—A short time ago, when a shepherd's wife at Aspenden, near Buntingford, was sitting with her children before the fire, the fire-place, hearth, store, the children's seats, and every other article in the vicinity disappeared, sinking down, as through a trap-door. It turned out that the fire-place sunk into an old well that had been built upon for more than half a century. The aperture left is about six feet in diameter, and the depth, as far as can be ascertained, for the debris, sixty feet, and containing a great quantity of water. About seventy years since the premises were in the occupation of Mr. Penn, a brewer, and it is supposed that the well was not arched over when built upon. Very recently we observed a new party-wall built upon oak planking over a well, without an arch. It is to be hoped the above recorded narrow escape may serve as a warning against such a practice.

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